

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13

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P R 121500Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4896

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

JMEMBASSY PRETORIA 1627

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MZ, RH

SUBJECT: ZIMBABWEANS SHELL UMTALI

REF: MAPUTO 0899

1. ACCORDING TO AUGUST 12 LOCAL PRESS, ZIMBABWEAN GUERILLAS, USING MORTARS, SHELLED THE RHODESIAN BORDER TOWN OF UMTALI FOR APPROXIMATELY THIRTY MINUTES DURING OHE EARLY HOURS OF AUGUST 11. ALTHOUGH THE OSTENSIBLE TARGET OF ATTACK WAS A RHODESIAN MILITARY BASE LOCATED ON EAST SIDE OF TOWN, ARTICLE REPORTED THAT SOME BUILDINGS IN THE CITY WERE DESTROYED AND EUROPEAN RESIDENTS LIVING ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN WERE EVACUATED TO THE CENTER OF THE CITY.

2. WITHOUT DENYING THAT 300 PEOPLE HAD BEEN KILLED IN SUNDAY'S RAID INSIDE MOZAMBIQUE, THE ARTICLE ALSO CLAIMED THAT THE RHODESIANS WERE CALLING THE MURDERED ZIMBABWEWNS "GUERILLAS" IN ORDER "CAMOUFLAGE THE MASSACRE OF DEFENSELESS CIVILIANS." THE PRESS AGAIN DENIED THE CHARGE THAT LAST WEEK'S RAID ON A RHODESIAN MILITARY CAMP WAS CARRIED OUT BY FRELIMO

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SOLDIERS. "THE ILLEGAL SALISBURY REGIME RECOGNIZES

IMPLICITLY THAT ITS ACTION (ON AUGUST 8) WAS MOTIVATED BY AN ATTACK UNDERTAKEN BY THE ZIMBABWEANS." "SMITH ALLEGES THAT THE ATTACK WAS AFFECTED BY MOZAMBICAN TROOPS" IN ORDER TO DECEIVE THE WORLD AND GAIN SUPPORT FOR HIS "CONDEMNED REGIME".

3. COMMENT: THE GPRM HAS NOT YET RELEASED AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON THE AUGUST 8 INCURSION OR THE AUGUST 11 COUNTERATTACK. SINCE PRESIDENT MACHEL IS STILL ON A TOUR OF THE NORTHERN PART OF MOZAMBIQUE, IT MAY BE SEVERAL MORE DAYS BEFORE AN OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT REACTION IS REGISTERED. DESPITE THE ABSENCE OF ANY OFFICIAL PRO- NOUNCEMENTS, THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY TAKEN COUNTER- MEASURES. ALTHOUGH TODAY'S PRESS REPORTS THAT THE ATTACK ON UMTALI WAS CARRIED OUT BY ZIMBABWEAN INSURGENTS, IN ALL LIKLIHOOD MOZAMBICAN TROOPS PARTICPATED IN THE OPERATION.
DE PREE

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